Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-93-056
Thursday
25 March 1993

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FBIS-NES-93-056 25 March 1993

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Addresses Palestinians on 'Id al-Fitr

JN2403203593 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1808 GMT 24 Mar 93

["Text" of address by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat to the Palestinian masses on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr; date and place not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: My family and kinfolk; my dear people in the homeland—the land of jihad and steadfastness. My dear people in the steadfast land of south Lebanon. To those who are raising the banners of struggle, to those who are gripping the stone of heroism, to those who are taking up struggle as a duty. My people in all the sites of struggle and jihad, both inside and outside the homeland; children of our Arab and Muslim nation; my brothers and beloved people: On the occasion of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr while you are chronicling the most marvelous epics of heroism and the finest examples of sacrifice, my heart reaches out to you wherever you are to nurse your wounds—a great, free, and proud people who will not be worn out by misfortune, nor will their will be broken by hardships—a generation that will write with letters of light and fire our blessed popular intifadah until such time that God will crown our endeavor with victory and our sacrifices with freedom, and cherish with His blessed care our country and al-Aqsa Mosque and first qiblah and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and our children and our dignity and independence.

My beloved ones: As our Arab and Islamic nation observes this blessed day, you hold out and persevere patiently on the land of steadfastness and jihad—the blessed land of Palestine; you hold out as strugglers and mujahidin proudly and mightily defying with your bare chests and fists and your sacred stones and your valiant resistance the Israeli army of occupation and its policies and crimes and its persistent, brazen violations of the most basic human rights and its ugly challenge of our right to live free in our free and independent homeland—a right that has been consecrated by law and crystallized by the march of humanity.

Brothers and beloved ones: As you flock to al-Aqsa Mosque to turn to God Almighty to offer gratitude for His bestowing on us the strength to keep up the jihad in defense of the homeland and the guidance to stand up to our enemy's crimes and practices that are playing havoc with the land, the human beings, and the sanctities, we renew the pledge and promise that we shall remain faithful to this land and these Islamic and Christian sanctities as one people waging a united struggle until we attain victory, God willing.

Brothers and beloved ones: All current attempts to circumvent our national, legitimate rights, which are acknowledged by the international legitimacy, will be in vain. Such attempts might be obstructive, but they cannot impede the just, aspired-for solution, no matter how long it takes. Israel's allegations that it wants peace cannot hide the escalating daily crimes against our masses everywhere. Yours is a just cause. It is a question of existence; to be or not to be. It is the question of our Arab and Islamic nation; to be or not to be. It is the question of holy Jerusalem, the holiest place, and the capital of our independent state, the key to peace. It is the accurate criterion for the justice of the new world order. It is the question of the living conscience of all lovers of freedom, justice, and equality in the world. Therefore, peace cannot be a just peace unless it is a Palestinian peace. Hence, we address peace-lovers in Israel and tell them: Let us struggle to stop these daily crimes and this escalating violence for the sake of a just peace for our children and yours.

One thousand greetings to the steadfast ones in steadfast southern Lebanon, who are firmly and faithfully countering aggression; to our brother deportees in Marj al-Zuhur; to all our beloved ones in the detention camps; and to all our prisoners and wounded. We reiterate our pride in them and in their suffering, wounds, and sacrifices, which are medals of honor on their chests and on the foreheads of our people and nation. One thousand greetings of pride and admiration to our new generals, the children, the cubs and flowers of Palestine, to the struggling Palestinian women, and to every struggling and steadfast man and old man. More and more steadfastness, more and more resistance, more and more unity! For the souls of our heroic martyrs we bow in glorification and reiterate the pledge and the oath that we will continue to follow the path of revolution and jihad until God bestows upon us one of the two good results; either victory or martyrdom for the sake of the sacred cause, for the sake of which martyrs have fallen to pave with their bodies the road to Jerusalem. The dawn is imminent. The victory is imminent. The state of Palestine is within a stone's throw. They see it as a far-off event, but we truly see it quite near.

Fain would they extinguish God's light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that his light should be perfected, even though the unbelievers may detest it. We will, without doubt, help our messengers and those who believe both in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses will stand forth. [Koranic verses]

Many happy returns. It is a revolution until victory is achieved and until Jerusalem is liberated with the help of God.

[Signed] Your brother, Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]

'Arafat Appeals to Israeli 'Peace Lovers'

LD2403114693 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Palestinian president also emphasized that peace in the Middle East will not be just if it is not a Palestinian peace, and that holy Jerusalem is the key for peace. He called on the peace

lovers in Israel to struggle side by side with the Palestinians to stop the daily crimes which the occupation authorities are carrying out, and to halt the escalating violence for the sake of the just peace for the Palestinian and Israeli children.

In his address, President 'Arafat also sent greetings and appreciation to the Palestinian deportees, and to all the prisoners and detainees in the prisons of the occupation, praising their steadfastness, endurance, and sacrifices. He renewed the pledge to the martyrs of the intifadah to continue the struggle and resistance until the Palestinian people earns its legitimate rights, and establishes its independent state on the land of Palestine with holy Jerusalem for its capital.

'Ashrawi, al-Husayni Depart for Washington

NC2503094993 Paris AFP in English 0908 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Amman, March 25 (AFP) - Leading Palestinian Faysal al-Husayni and spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi flew to Washington Thursday [25 March] for talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher aimed at breaking deadlock in the peace process, a Palestinian source said.

Al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian peace team, and 'Ashrawi arrived in Amman early Thursday from the occupied territories.

They are scheduled to meet Christopher on Friday to discuss the peace process and crisis over Israel's deportation of 400 Palestinians to south Lebanon, which caused the Palestinians to suspend participation in the talks.

This last-ditch effort to lure the Palestinians back to the negotiating table comes ahead of an Arab strategy meeting in Damascus Sunday and Monday.

Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians are to decide on whether to attend the ninth round of bilaterals scheduled for April 20 in Washington.

Al-Husayni, the leading Palestinian in the occupied territories, has said the Washington visit came in response to an "official invitation by Christopher in order to overcome obstacles facing peace talks."

The Palestinians rejected a U.S.-Russian invitation to attend the forthcoming bilaterals unless the deportee crisis was solved and Israel pledged to halt expulsions.

Sha'th Discusses Peace Talks, Hamas, Other Issues

PM2403122393 Barcelona LA VANGUARDIA in Spanish 19 Mar 93 p 9

[Interview with Nabil Sha'th, chairman of the Palestinian National Council Political Committee, by Henrique Cymerman in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] Cairo—Nabil Sha'th is probably the man closest to PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and one of his possible replacements in the future. He is now the PLO official responsible for the peace negotiations. 'Arafat's political adviser, and chairman of the Political Committee of the PNC [Palestine National Council]—the Palestinian parliament in exile. He asserts that he is holding unofficial contacts with a number of Israeli deputies and several ministers.

[Cymerman] Why do you refuse to accept the U.S. invitation to return to the negotiating table?

[Sha'th] We were negotiating with the United States a solution for the deportees. We reached agreement on six points, and believed that Rabin had accepted them. Since then we have received no response. We believe that the invitation was premature; that it disregarded the problem which Rabin created with the deportation of 400 people.

[Cymerman] Mubarak has warned that this could be the last train for peace.

[Sha'th] I do not believe so. It is an important opportunity, and we do not wish to miss it at all, but rules should be laid down which cannot be subsequently broken. Our journey to peace is lengthy and should keep to the rules of the game. The deportation without legal process could derail that train.

[Cymerman] The Arab countries seem prepared to go to Washington even without the Palestinians.

[Sha'th] We will all go to an Arab summit in Damascus, where it will be decided jointly whether or not to go to Washington—at least temporarily—until the issue of the deportees is resolved.

[Cymerman] To what extent do the Palestinians in the territories enjoy autonomy or receive orders from the PLO?

[Sha'th] Their leadership is that of the PLO. They put forward suggestions, but the PLO has the last word.

[Cymerman] What is your opinion of the wave of fundamentalism in the territories?

[Sha'th] We view Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] not as an ideological opposition but as a comrade against the Israeli occupation. Sometimes being a comrade is difficult, but, fortunately, that period of difficulty is now over.

[Cymerman] The PLO and Hamas have set up a unified command of the intifadah. Has the PLO become more radical?

[Sha'th] No. This means that the Palestinians are becoming more united against the brutal Israeli opposition. Here the issue is the unity of the resistance—not the stance on peace. In the latter respect we remain fundamentally different.

[Cymerman] There are rumors about a secret agreement between Israel and the Syrians.

[Sha'th] No. We trust our Syrian brothers. Moreover, a comprehensive peace is in the interest of Israel and of Syria, which wishes to maintain its leadership in the Arab world.

[Cymerman] Does 'Arafat trust Rabin?

[Sha'th] He distrusts him deeply. He does not believes that he is serious in his desire for peace.

[Cymerman] Do you agree with 'Arafat on this point?

[Sha'th] Not entirely, although 'Arafat has sufficient grounds to distrust Rabin. If Rabin really wants peace, we could achieve it in a month, but Rabin's problem is that he is to the right of his ministers—including the ultraorthodox Shas [Torah Observing Sephardim] ministers. I speak with them on the telephone, and although they voted with Rabin on the issue of the deportees, the ministers wish to put an end to this rapidly.

Paper: Violence May Become 'Routine Phenomenon'

TA2403171693 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 23 Mar 93 p 11

[Editorial: "Who Has Lost Patience?"]

[Text] The remarks by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin that the Israelis are increasingly losing patience in respect to addressing the impasse of occupation reflect the prevailing deadlock. This is epitomized by the Palestinian people's suffering on one hand, and Israel's insistence on maintaining the harsh status quo on the other hand. Events and even the slow moving Israeli public opinion, however, are pushing toward a just and honorable solution.

The escalating violence in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 stems from the Arab residents' frustration and despair at the non-implementation of UN resolutions calling for an end to the occupation and the suffering of the Palestinian people, who have been deprived of their most elementary human and national rights. At the same time, the Palestinians have clearly stated that the enjoyment of those basic rights will be within the framework of a peace deal that will ensure for the other party its security and inalienable rights.

What we fear most is that violence will be transformed into a routine phenomenon that will not affect the conscience of either side. Should this happen, this land, which the world has normally thought of as the cradle of peace and the land of tolerance and harmony, will turn into another Northern Ireland where bloody events take place on a daily basis without making an impact on anyone. This must not be allowed to occur despite the fact that some Israeli thinkers and leading politicians are anticipating or downplaying such a development.

Regrettably, the defenseless Palestinian people do not have the key to a solution. The only one that can act, if it possesses historical courage, is the Israeli political leadership which by virtue of occupation is dominating another people who, as the entire world is aware, are demanding legitimate rights granted to them by the international community. Those people accepted the principle of peace and went along that path as the others. Now, however, they are being asked to stay out of the bargaining and deals and their land remain occupied for an indefinite period. Furthermore, the other party rejects even talk about setting a date for ending the occupation.

The Palestinians have suffered for long and are still suffering. Since the Israelis, too, have a long history of persecution, they should be the first to feel the pain of the Palestinians and hasten to end that pain by ending the occupation within an expanded framework of a comprehensive and just peace. Let the voices of Israelis rise not for continuing the persecution and repression, but for opening a new page in relations between the two peoples based on peace, neighborliness, and respect for the rights of nations and all mankind.

AL-SHA'B May Close Permanently Due to Finances

TA2303163493 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 22 Mar 93 p 3

[By Muna Muhaysin]

[Excerpt] The month-old labor strike at AL-SHA'B newspaper, one of East Jerusalem's oldest Arabic dailies, seems to have evolved into a permanent closure.

The strike went into effect Feb. 9, after the paper's general manager, 'Ali Ya'ish, was unable to pay January's wages with the promised yearly increase ($8.50).

The paper has been in fiscal straits for years now, and sells the least among the four Palestinian dailies.

At a meeting in East Jerusalem March 13, Ya'ish told the newspapers' workers' union to have all employees stop by the accountant's office to collect whatever money they are owed by the newspaper.

So far, only one reporter has done so. The rest of the staff are waiting to see what will develop after some political leaders, including Faysal al-Husayni, promised to intervene with management. [passage omitted]

Egypt

NY Blast's 'Alleged Ringleader' Arrested

NC2403164493 Paris AFP in English 1623 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Kafr al-Dawwar, March 24 (AFP)—The Egyptian authorities arrested the alleged ringleader of the World Trade Centre bombing on Monday [22 March] shortly after he returned from the United States, his family said here Wednesday.

Mahmud Abu-Halimah, 33, was detained as he tried to seek refuge with his family who live in this village 30 kilometres (20 miles) from Alexandria in northern Egypt, they said.

The Egyptian authorities refused to make any comment, but there could be a backlash from fundamentalists over his handover to the United States.

The February 26 bombing killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

A U.S. federal investigator said Abu-Halimah, 33, a New Jersey taxi driver, was handed over to U.S. agents who arrived in Cairo Tuesday.

He was expected to arrive late Wednesday at Stewart Air Force Base north of New York City and would be arraigned either Wednesday or Thursday for an indictment handed up earlier this week, according to the investigator.

Interior Ministry: No Record of Suspect

NC2403165093 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 22 Mar 93 p 1

[Text] A responsible Interior Ministry official has affirmed that the ministry has no record of anyone named Mahmud Abu-Halimah, a suspect in the World Trade Center explosion in the United States.

Major General Jalal al-Shami, head of the Interior Ministry's Public Relations Department, asserted that the ministry has not issued an identification card or passport to anyone of that name.

Papers Comment on Suspect

NC2403223893 Paris AFP in English 2218 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, March 24 (AFP)—The alleged ringleader of the World Trade Center bombing in New York was handed over to the United States because he is a naturalised American citizen, Egypt's AL-AKHBAR newspaper reported Thursday [25 March].

But another daily, AL-AHRAM, suggested that Mahmud Abu-Halimah, 33, had returned to the United States of his own free will, adding that "Iraqi intelligence services financed (his) activities."

Family members of the Egyptian-born Abu-Halimah said Wednesday he had been arrested Monday by the Egyptian authorities after his return from the United States to seek refuge in his native village of Kafr al-Dawwar, near Alexandria.

"A decision was taken Wednesday morning to repatriate Abu-Halimah to the United States because he is an American citizen," said AL-AKHBAR. It said that another suspect in the bombing, Ibrahim al-Jabruni was also a naturalised American.

AL-AHRAM meanwhile reported that Abu-Halimah "left New York on March 6 for Saudi Arabia from where he travelled to Cairo."

"He stayed in the Egyptian capital for a few days before returning to the United States," AL-AHRAM said.

But a U.S. federal investigator said Abu-Halimah, a New Jersey taxi driver, was handed over to U.S. agents who arrived in Cairo Tuesday. [passage omitted]

'Security Source' on Suspect's Departure

NC2503063993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] A security source commented on reports carried by news agencies yesterday on Mahmud Abu-Halimah, who arrived in the country on a German travel document and who carries a U.S. identity card, saying:

1. He arrived in Alexandria from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia carrying a German travel document without an entry visa.

2. The competent security forces monitored his movements. Investigations confirmed that he left the country in 1980 and emigrated to Germany, where he married a German woman and was granted a German travel document. He then travelled to the United States and obtained U.S. citizenship.

The media recently reported that he took part in the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York.

3. U.S. investigators have conveyed to the competent Egyptian authorities the available information on his involvement in the incident.

4. When confronted with this information, he insisted on facing the U.S. investigators to deny his role in the incident.

In response to his desire to clear himself before the U.S. investigators, which have collected the evidence, and since he was a U.S. citizen, the competent authorities have not objected to his leaving the country voluntarily. This was done yesterday morning.

Islamic Group Denounces Handover

NC2503142593 Paris AFP in English 1327 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 25 (AFP) - The alleged ringleader of the World Trade Centre bombing, Mahmud Abu-Halimah, asked to be taken to the United States so he could clear his name, the Egyptian government said Thursday [25 March].

A statement said Abu-Halimah was an American citizen and the authorities here granted his request to leave the country "of his own free will."

Abu-Halimah, 33, a New York taxi driver, was arrested this week near the northern city of Alexandria and handed over to agents from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation.

He "formally denied" accusations that he was implicated in the attack and said he wanted to "face his accusers," the government said.

The February 26 bombing killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

Abu-Halimah arrived in the United States on Wednesday and was scheduled to be arraigned on Thursday.

His family said he was arrested Monday after his return from the United States to seek refuge in his native village of Kafr al-Dawwar, near Alexandria.

The government statement said Abu-Halimah left Egypt for Germany in 1980 where he married a German and obtained a German travel document, before settling in the United States where he became a naturalised American.

He entered Egypt using the German document via Saudi Arabia, the statement said.

The government statement was the first official comment on the handover of Abu-Halimah, but it made no reference to his Egyptian origin.

His handover could trigger a backlash from Muslim extremists who are locked in a year-long battle with the authorities to overthrow the government and set up a strict Islamic state. [passage omitted]

The al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group] condemned the handover of Abu-Halimah to the U.S. authorities and threatened to retaliate.

"We will not stand by with our arms folded," Husni al-Najdi, the al-Jama'ah leader in its southern stronghold of Asyut told AFP.

He accused the Egyptian government of "corruption" and subordination to the United States.

"This corrupt regime wants to show allegiance to its American masters and has thus decided to hand it over a young Egyptian, disregarding Egyptian public opinion," al-Najdi said.

He said the arrest and handover of Abu-Halimah was aimed against Shaykh Abd-al-Rahman "and at exterminating Muslims in mosques." Al-Najdi is wanted by the Egyptian authorities for distributing anti-government tracts.

'Abd-al-Rahman Urges Fight Against Regime

NC2403172193 Paris AFP in English 1649 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Asyut, March 24 (AFP)—The exiled spiritual guide of Egypt's Muslim fundamentalists urged his followers Wednesday [24 March] to hit back at the government "blow for blow," in a fiery message he described as a last will and testament.

Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, a blind cleric facing deportation from the United States and a trial in his native Egypt for organising an anti-government protest, predicted the rise of an Islamic state.

"Fighters of the faith, resist injustice, do not bend under the yoke of oppression and fight back, blow for blow," he urged followers, in a statement distributed by members of the militant al-Jama'ah Islamiyah [Islamic Group] at mosques in the fundamentalist stronghold of Asyut, southern Egypt.

"I feel that my end is nearing and that I will soon meet my maker. Therefore I must leave my testament," said 'Abd-al-Rahman.

"Your state of terror will last only an instant while an Islamic state will last for eternity," he said, referring to President Husni Mubarak, whose government has been locked in a battle to break the al-Jama'ah for the past year.

"No to you Mubarak. No to your regime. No to your gallows."

Addressing Muslim militants on trial, 'Abd-al-Rahman said: "Break the tyrants at the scene of their crimes, make their courts resound with the echoes of verses from the holy Koran. Be firm and strong when confronted by your judges."

Forty-nine Muslim fundamentalists are currently on trial on charges of involvement in attacks on tourists.

Egyptian "mujahidin must resist the injustice" of the authorities, 'Abd-al-Rahman added in his message for the feast of 'Id al-Fitr marking the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

The cleric also criticised Egypt's support for U.S. policies in the Middle East, including Arab-Israeli peace talks, and dismissed Cairo's accusations that Iran and Sudan were supporting terrorism.

"We will not fight for the United States which claims Iran and Sudan protect terrorism. The destruction of Iraq and Iran as well as the humiliation suffered by Bosnian Muslims suffice," he said. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Congratulates New Israeli President

NC2403184893 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] President Husni Mubarak today cabled congratulations to Ezer Weizman on his election as president of Israel.

Weizman played a basic role in initiating the peace process.

U.S. Stand on Israel Said To Conflict With Peace

NC2403161193 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 17 Mar 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Middle East Security Is the Responsibility of All Parties"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's visit to the United States seems to have been extremely successful from the perspective of Israeli interests. He succeeded in securing several U.S. positions supporting Israeli interests, which in fact conflict with the interests of the other countries in the region, primarily the Arab countries. Rabin held talks with U.S. President Clinton, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, and other senior U.S. officials focusing on bilateral ties and another major issue relating to Israel's concept of security in the region. Regarding bilateral ties, Clinton and Rabin agreed to upgrade the level of the strategic dialogue between the United States and Israel and both agreed on the need to address new issues before the spread of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction in the region, as well as other security issues that may arise in the future. A U.S. official emphasized that Washington is committed to maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge in the region.

In fact, the overall talks and agreements between Rabin and the U.S. officials seem so strange as to cause astonishment. Obviously, Washington dealt with Israel as its authorized agent to protect the region's security although it is the main cause of instability besetting the region. Israel is a racist, intransigent state that antagonizes its Arab neighbors and rejects their demands for their usurped rights.

The U.S. commitment to maintaining Israel's qualitative military superiority is inconsistent with the U.S. endeavors to limit the spread of weapons of mass destruction and its sponsoring of the peace process. When the United States talks of a strategic relationship with Israel, it torpedoes the foundations of the peace process in which it claims to play the role of an honest unbiased partner. Moreover, during Rabin's talks in the United States, a U.S. official pointed to a suspicious link between the Middle East peace process and the threats that the region may face after peace has been reached or as a result of it. This statement by the official, who denied that these threats may come from Iraq or Iran, said they have "another nature" and tacitly hinted that there is a common move by both countries against fundamentalism. The United States is seeking to assign Israel a security task to safeguard the region from fundamentalism. Naturally, the U.S. official did not spell this out frankly, but his hint makes any statement superfluous, because his talk of threats after peace is established between Israel and the Arabs means that the source would be a third party. The context makes U.S.-Israeli strategic agreement and cooperation justifiable. Also, within the same context, it seems only natural that Israel should offer the United States a naval base for a U.S. aircraft carrier at Haifa.

All this, naturally, totally conflicts with the realities and givens of the situation in the Arab region. The Arab countries alone should protect their security and Washington's real interests should lie with these countries and not with Israel. If the United States is really eager to play the role of an honest partner in the peace process in the region, and if it is interested in stability in the region, security in the Middle East is the responsibility of all its countries and not one certain country alone, even if this country is Israel.

CIA Said Behind U.S. Media Campaign

NC2403165693 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 21 Mar 93 pp 1, 5

[Article by Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar: "What Are They Planning? What Do They Want From Egypt?"]

[Excerpts] The position of some U.S. news media in particular, and of the British media—especially the BBC—toward Egypt is highly suspicious.

Reports published or broadcast by these media make us wonder what they and those behind them really want.

It has become certain that there is a premeditated campaign to discredit Egypt with no good cause, and to cast doubt on security in Egypt by undermining the country's stability and national economy.

The reports and programs full of hatred against Egypt can be nothing but advertisements sponsored by some side seeking to realize this objective.

The official U.S. position, where the deeds actually contradict the fine words, has baffled me over the past few months.

Official U.S. departments talk daily about terrorism and the need to fight it while they embrace some of its advocates under weak pretexts. Indeed, they extend official invitations to people accused of sponsoring terrorist and sabotage operations to visit the United States.

This happened to Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, who was accused of the assassination of former President al-Sadat. They are now trying to make him a media

model, presenting him in the same way they presented criminals in the cowboy movies. U.S. Congress debates disclosed that they granted him two visas to enter the United States, one issued in Egypt and the other in Sudan. This means they lied when they said that he received only one visa from Khartoum, and that it was issued by mistake because he was listed among those prohibited from entering the United States!

The same happened with Hasan al-Turabi, the Sudanese "theoretician" for political terrorism in the name of Islam—terrorism that Islam never accepts. He was invited to visit the United States and meet with many figures, including Congressmen.

This behavior attracted my attention. When I, along with a group of journalists, met him at the American Embassy in Cairo in the presence of the U.S. ambassador and the embassy's press adviser, I asked U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Cohen about the reasons and objectives of al-Turabi's invitation.

As usual, he told me that the visit was organized by a civil American society, and that there was no official invitation.

I could not stop myself from laughing, and I told him: We in the media realize how such invitations are leaked in coordination with the Central Intelligence Agency to serve certain objectives. Of course, I got no reaction to my comment.

Because there are no secrets in the United States, the Congress debate revealed the contacts between CIA agents and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the occupied Palestinian territories although the State Department and senior U.S. officials accused the organization of practicing terrorism!! [passage omitted]

The question posed by everyone, not only in Egypt but in many world capitals, is: What do they want from Egypt, and what are they planning for it?

Do they want to attack Egypt as part of their frantic campaign against Islam? They are making every possible effort to wrongly portray Islam as a terrorist, backward, and anti-progress religion. [passage omitted]

Judging from my own experience, I cannot acquit American and British media of collaboration with some intelligence services to adopt this flagrant aggressive position toward Egypt. Leaking fabricated information to serve a certain purpose is part of this collaboration.

But the conspirators, groups of slanders, and those behind them must realize that the Egypt of principles and values is not the Iran of the shah; that Egypt, the Sunni Muslim country, is not Shiite Iran; and that there is a basic difference between the situation in Egypt and the old situation in Iran.

The people of Egypt believe in the values and tolerance of Islam. They are backed by their ancient history and a civilization that dates back thousands of years. These people are not known for murder and terrorism. They are eager for their country and its security and stability as they have always been for thousands of years. [passage omitted]

Al-Azhar Imam Denies Egyptian Regime 'Secular'

NC2503102393 Cairo 'AQIDATI in Arabic 16 Mar 93 p 9

[Report by Muhammad al-Abnudi]

[Excerpts] As part of a campaign of "guidance and enlightenment," Shaykh Jad-al-Haq 'Ali Jad-al-Haq, his eminence the grand imam of al-Azhar, visited al-Gharbiyah Governorate. He was accompanied by Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, the minister of awqaf, and counselor Mahir al-Jundi, the Governor of al-Gharbiyah. A mass rally was held in his honor, which was attended by religious, popular, and executive leaders in the governorate, as well as a large number of students. His eminence Shaykh Jad-al-Haq insisted on an open dialogue with the audience and he fielded a large number of important questions.

Muhammad Hasan al-Sayyid, a student of the Commercial Technical Institute in Tanta, said: The term secularism is being used frequently these days. What is the meaning of this term and is it true that Egypt is a secular state, as some claim?

Shaykh Jad-al-Haq replied: Secularism means separation between religion and life. It also means that religion is an act of worshipping that is unrelated to life. This term does not conform with the Muslim religion, which is a religion of life. Islam organizes the relationship between a person and his God, society, family, and neighbors. The Muslim religion deals with all aspects of life. As for those who claim that the Egyptian regime is "secular," this is wrong. Article 2 of the Constitution stipulates that Islam is the state's religion and that shari'ah principles are the main source of legislation. Therefore, we must not listen to those who raise these slogans. [passage omitted]

'Ulayyah Muhammad Muhammadayn, an employee, asked about those who attribute terrorism to Islam.

Shaykh Jad-al-Haq said: Those who attribute terrorism to Islam are more dangerous than the terrorists themselves. Islam is innocent of terrorism. Those who attribute terrorism to Islam are fierce enemies of Islam and aim to distort its image.

Halah Fu'ad Hasan asked about al-Azhar scholars' attitude toward terrorism and why those who terrorize innocent people are not executed.

Shaykh Jad-al-Haq said: The scholars' role is confined to preaching and explaining the correct interpretation of Islam. As for the execution of the terrorists, this is the responsibility of the ruling authorities after a terrorist is proven guilty of committing his crime. [passage omitted]

'Militant' Killed, 2 Policemen Wounded in Clash

NC2503103593 Paris AFP in English GMT 93

[Text] Asyut, Egypt, March 25 (AFP) - At least one Muslim militant was killed and two policemen were seriously wounded in a dawn clash in southern Egypt on Thursday [25 March], police said.

The fighting broke out in Abu Tij, 30 kilometers (19 miles) south of Asyut, when the security forces launched a search operation for Muslim militant suspects.

Around 130 people have been killed, including 60 militants, in a year of fundamentalist violence.

Police Arrest 36 'Extremists,' Seize Explosives

NC2503092393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0903 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Cairo security authorities have arrested a terrorist organization comprised of 36 extremists in possession of large amount of explosives.

AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I today reports that the security agencies arrested the organization members inside a central Cairo cafe. They were in possession of two devices containing ammonium phosphate, which is used in manufacturing explosives, and a number of envelopes with letters addressed to senior state officials, public figures, and international news agencies.

The newspaper says the prosecution has begun to investigate the case.

Libya

Saudi Arabia Urged To Admit Libyans for Hajj

LD2403131593 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0949 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Tripoli, 24 Mar (JANA)—Preachers of the blessed 'Id al-Fitr prayers which were held today held in public squares addressed a call to King Fahd in which they pointed out that with the beginning of the pilgrimage months, Muslims throughout the whole world look forward to visiting the Ka'bah and standing at Mount 'Arafat on the day of the greater pilgrimage.

The leader of the 'Id prayers in the Green Square in Tripoli said from this place in the city of Tripoli: We address a call to King Fahd, in his capacity as custodian of the two holy mosques, to say that the second pilgrimage season has started, and that it is the second season which is descending upon us while the Muslims in Libya are prevented from performing the pilgrimage. Is this permissible?

The preacher emphasized that it is not permissible to prevent Muslims from performing the pilgrimage obligation just as it is not permissible for Mecca to be admitted into the international political battle, and that Mecca, God's holy city, must be neutral and connected neither with the political system nor with the unjust resolution, particularly since this resolution has come from the Christian countries.

The preacher pointed out that if Saudi Arabia wanted to behave as a political state, it must comply with this resolution, though it has originated from three countries only, and that Saudi Arabia is free in its choices and relations. He emphasizing that Mecca and Medina must not be inside this political battle.

The preacher of the 'Id prayers in the Green Square in Tripoli pointed out that we cannot perform the pilgrimage with permission from America and that Saudi Arabia should have been aware of this issue from the very first day. Let us assume that a certain country was in a state of war with Saudi Arabia; would this mean that the head of that country, or its citizens, could not perform the pilgrimage because their country was in a state of war with Saudi Arabia?

The preacher emphasized in his sermon that Mecca and Medina should lie outside the political system and that obtaining permission from anyone to visit the Ka'bah is impermissible.

Morocco

King Pardons Various Prisoners on 'Id al-Fitr

LD2403141093 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] On the occasion of the 'Id al-Fitr celebrations for this year 1413 AH, corresponding to 1993, our gracious imam his majesty the exalted King Hassan II issued his obeyed instructions to waive the remainder of the prison sentence of 217 prisoners and reduce the prison sentences of 226 internees, to drop the prison sentence but retain the fine for 14 persons, to drop the prison sentence of six individuals, to change a sentence of life imprisonment to a defined period of prison in the case of one prisoner. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Minister on Egyptian Army 'Occupation' of Hala'ib

NC2503120093 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19 Mar 93 pp 1, 11

[Interview with 'Ali al-Haj Muhammad Sudanese minister of economic planning and investment, by Al-SAFIR correspondent in Paris Sami Kulaybi; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [Kulaybi] Why haven't you responded to the U.S. Congress' harsh words against Sudan?

[Muhammad] Actually, this is a nuisance concerning them. In the beginning they wanted to listen to all sides, but they changed their minds. They were satisfied with

listening to the testimony of senators, U.S. State Department representatives, and some specialists on Sudanese affairs. We were not given the opportunity to respond. From what I heard about the session's debates, it is clear that there was a great deal of exaggeration and deception, and a lack of knowledge and imagination. The Congress members are relying on testimony and newspaper reports, including Arabic newspapers based in London and Europe. Undoubtedly, this will have grave consequences for the U.S. Administration, which is what we told the Congress members we met with. [passage omitted]

[Kulayb] Did you discuss your dispute with Egypt with the United States?

[Muhammad] No, we did not, because it is an Egyptian-Sudanese affair that does not concern others.

[Kulayb] But Khartoum supports the referral of this issue to international forums.

[Muhammad] Yes, because Hala'ib is a Sudanese territory. This is proven by documents in our possession. Now that it is occupied by the Egyptian armed forces, it was necessary to refer the issue to international forums because this represents a serious escalation. We do not want war, nor do we want to take up arms against any Arab or neighbor. Therefore, we discuss all options at the Security Council, the United Nations, and other agencies. This is our right, and the alternative would be war, which we do not want.

[Kulayb] Sudanese and Egyptian preparations in Hala'ib herald fighting if not war.

[Muhammad] We consider the Egyptian Army's presence [in Hala'ib] as an occupation and a provocative measure by Cairo, and the entire world knows what the occupation of someone's else's land by force means.

[Kulayb] Will you resume the Egyptian-Sudanese Joint Committee meetings to search for new solutions?

[Muhammad] The committee has decided to meet in Cairo at a later date, but I do not know when that will take place.

[Kulayb] Was this decision reached after Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's mediation?

[Muhammad] Yes, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and other leaders asked Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir to agree to the committee's meeting. And, due to these requests, the Sudanese Government agreed on meeting in Cairo.

Newspaper To Resume Publication in Apr

NC2303195493 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 22 Mar 93 p 14

[Text] Sudanese newspaper AL-KHARTUM will resume publication in April after a long absence from the scene. It will be published by al-Ashiqqa' Publishing House, owned and operated by Dr. al-Baqir Ahmad 'Abdallah, an expert in political relations in the Arab world. Well-known Sudanese journalist Fadlallah Muhammad will act as the paper's editor in chief.

AL-KHARTUM will be printed in London, Cairo, and Jeddah.

Tunisia

President Pardons Prisoners on Independence Day

LD1903214493 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 Mar 93

[Excerpts] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met this morning at Carthage Palace with Minister of Interior Abdallah Kallel and Minister of Justice Sadok Chabane. On the occasion of independence day, his excellency the president has decided to grant exceptional pardon to 1,230 sentenced prisoners. This pardon falls within the context of the special program for the rehabilitation of prisoners and facilitating their reintegration into society, the program approved by the president during a ministerial council held on 19 October 1992. [passage omitted]

The president also decided to grant ordinary pardon to 1,052 sentenced prisoners, reducing the terms for some and reducing the terms and release for others. The minister of interior informed his excellency the president of the report by the committee on conditional discharge which grants 260 prisoners conditional discharge. The minister of justice in his turn informed his excellency the president of the report by the pardon committee which provides for the restoration of rights to 1,622 sentenced prisoners.

Kuwait

Secret Contacts With PLO, Oil Sales to Israel Denied

LD2303133793 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0820 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Kuwait, 23 Mar (KUNA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, denied in a statement published here today that Kuwait has held secret contacts with the PLO. The Kuwaiti paper AL-ANBA' quoted him as saying that "under no circumstances will Kuwait move in this direction without looking back at the painful past," referring to the PLO's support for the unjust Iraqi invasion of the State of Kuwait, and its cooperation with the occupation forces.

In a statement reported by the same newspaper, Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin also denied that Kuwait has received an offer from Israel to carry Kuwaiti oil to the port of Gaza.

Al-Shahin pointed out to AL-ANBA' that Kuwait "was and will always be in the forefront of the countries supportive of the Palestinian cause because it is the Arab's first cause." He said that "our stances are still firm despite the wounds and pain which the PLO has caused." He affirmed that "our commitment falls within the Arab League framework, and within the morals which govern Kuwait's policy; that is, respect for the stances."

Referring to what some foreign newspapers in Washington have published on what it described as the Israeli offer to buy Kuwaiti oil, he said: "This offer can only be described as an attempt to split the Arab ranks, or an attempt to feel the pulse, and this does not enter into Kuwait's calculations." He affirmed that "the whole matter is no more than smoke in the air."

Al-Shahin also affirmed Kuwait's interest in taking part in Arab meetings if a suitable place is made available to her. He said that "Kuwait will not stay away from the meetings for which the Arab League calls." In this respect, he pointed out that "Kuwait will participate in the Arab labor ministers' meeting which will convene in Jordan. Kuwait will be represented by Muhammad al-Shabnan, assistant undersecretary for labor affairs at the Social Affairs Ministry.

* Shaykh 'Ali To Testify Before Committee

93P50106C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 13 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Fadiyah al-Zu'bi and Nasir al-Mutayri]

[Excerpts] Kuwait—Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah al-Sabah, former Kuwaiti minister of oil and finance, has voiced his complete readiness to cooperate with the fact-finding committee [on the Iraqi invasion] to the fullest in order to uncover the hostile Iraqi designs against Kuwait.

Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah al-Sabah said in an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT yesterday that he is eager to explain all aspects of the oil relations that existed between Kuwait and Iraq before the invasion. He affirmed that he understands the summoning of the ministers and officials before the committee to explain "and that this is a natural, ordinary matter." [passage omitted]

The deputy chairman of the National Assembly and chairman of the committee, Deputy Salih al-Fidalah, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Shaykh 'Ali al-Khalifah would testify before the committee in its meeting scheduled for today. He explained that the committee would listen with interest to what he said because "the conflict over the oil policy was one of the Iraqi pretexts for the invasion." [passage omitted]

Qatar

Amir Undergoes Medical Tests; Results 'Good'

JN2503115393 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1110 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Doha, 25 Mar (WAKH)—It has been announced in Doha that His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, amir of Qatar, was admitted into the hospital last night and underwent some general medical tests.

A statement issued by the Amiri Court, broadcast by Radio Doha today, said the results of the tests were good and satisfactory, and that his highness will leave the hospital at a later time.

Opposition Leader Urges Economic Sanctions

LD2303223593 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 2100 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] One of the leaders of the Iraqi opposition tonight urged the UN Security Council to re-impose economic sanctions on the Baghdad regime in order to protect oppressed minorities in Iraq.

Suhayb al-Hakim, secretary general of the London-based Organization of Human Rights in Iraq, said that it would be an encouragement to stand up to the Iraqi regime and an assistance to Iraqi citizens who were suffering from the regime's oppression, if the Iraqi regime was forced to allow in human rights observers in the same manner as it had been forced to allow in UN weapons inspectors.

Suhayb al-Hakim added that the Iraqi Human Rights Organization is prepared to inform international organizations about the places where Iraqi citizens are being detained by the Iraqi regime, which have not been made public.

Belgian Development Worker Shot Dead in North

BR2303153393 Groot-Bijgaarden DE STANDAARD in Dutch 23 Mar 93 p 1

[Article by "HS": "Sniper Kills Belgian in Iraq"]

[Text] Brussels—Development worker Vincent Tollet (29) from Brussels was killed by a sniper in northern Iraq on Monday. Tollet was in Iraq on behalf of the nongovernmental organization Handicap International (HI), where he headed a rehabilitation center for the handicapped.

The incident occurred Monday morning on the road to Dokan [place-name as published], some 50 km from al-Sulamaniyah in the north of the country. Mr. Tollet was sitting behind the steering wheel of an HI car when shots suddenly were fired from another car, mortally wounding Tollet, a bachelor. His two passengers, Frenchman Gerard Roger, a technician-orthopedist, and an Iraqi policeman were unhurt. The perpetrators escaped.

The rehabilitation center in al-Sulamaniyah was set up to take care of victims of the Iran-Iraq war.

Two years ago, a Belgian HI worker was killed in Afghanistan. That incident marked the organization's withdrawal from the country.

Oil Ministry Source on Damage to Installations

JN2403160593 Baghdad INA in English 1545 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 24, INA—Material damage inflicted on the oil installations in Baghdad and other provinces by the US-led aggression on Iraq amounted, according to estimates of the United Nations, to six billion dollars.

A source at the Oil Ministry clarified that the number of air raid targeting the oil installations in Iraq reached 2,500 attacks causing total and semi-total damage to those installations which included refineries, gas stations, units for processing crude oil, storages, terminals, pipelines, pumping stations in addition to petrol stations the destruction of most of them ranged between 90-100 per cent.

Rabin Against Shooting Suspects in Custody

TA2403211093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says that we must not shoot an enemy who has already surrendered. Yitzhaq Rabin told the Bet Shemesh Labor Party young guard that the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] norms stipulate that we must not harm an enemy who has surrendered and must not shoot a man who is tied. Yitzhaq Rabin said that the best soldiers are those who behave as decent human beings.

Soldiers, Residents Continue To Clash in Gaza Strip

Arab Killed, 3 Wounded

TA2403201193 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Ibrahim al-Zumri, a 28-year-old father of seven, was killed in the al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood in Gaza this evening. The incident started when several hundred Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supporters held a gathering on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr, during which they hoisted PLO flags. Border policemen who patrolled the area asked them to remove the flags. A disturbance ensued in the area and the residents threw stones and bottles at the policemen. Al-Zumri was killed and three other inhabitants wounded from shots fired by the border policemen in return.

Soldier Slightly Wounded

TA2403164293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Mar 93 p A2

[Report by Yehudit Gruenblatt and Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldier sustained a slight leg injury yesterday evening when a burst of fire was directed at a patrol jeep in the al-Mughazi refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The soldiers manning the patrol returned the fire and searches were conducted in the area.

An Arab youth who was shot by IDF soldiers in the West Bank yesterday died of his wounds. The IDF spokesman's representative in the Central Command said that the youth was wanted by the security forces.

Two Gaza Strip inhabitants were murdered on Monday night and Tuesday morning by masked youths. Mahmud Hasan Ghanim, 20, was shot to death in the al-Burayj refugee camp yesterday morning by masked youths. His body was transferred to the al-Shifa' Hospital.

Muhammad Hasan al-Kurd, 20, was axed to death Monday night in Dayr al-Balah. Three masked youths called him out of his house and when he came out, proceeded to murder him. According to Arab sources both men were suspected of being collaborators.

A curfew was clamped on the town of Dayr al-Balah yesterday morning and was lifted in the afternoon. Arab sources say that sounds of explosion were heard from one of the town's areas. They claim that the IDF blew up a bunker in which explosive materials were apparently hoarded.

[In a related report in page A2 of the same newspaper, military correspondent Eytan Rabin adds that "an IDF second lieutenant was suspended and sentenced to 14 days imprisonment after it transpired that he acted contrary to regulations in an incident in which a child was shot to death in Rafah two days ago. The IDF issued a statement expressing regret over the incident."

[The report states that "between 21-24 March three children were killed by the IDF in incidents in Khan Yunus and Rafah. Since the beginning of the intifadah five IDF officers who were involved in shooting incidents with children have been suspended. In all these incidents it transpired that the officers acted contrary to regulations."]

Arab Wounded in Chest

TA2503052593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Shots were fired at an Israeli patrol last night in the al-Nusayrat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The soldiers on patrol were not hurt. They returned fire. Later, a resident of the area was hospitalized with a bullet wound in the chest. The Army says it is investigating the circumstances of the man's injury.

Al-Shifa' Hospital in Gaza is reporting that the Arab resident of the al-Shaykh Radwan neighborhood, Ibrahim Muhammad al-Zumri, died of stab wounds and not from Border Police gunfire.

In al-Shaykh Radwan, border policemen fired at hundreds of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] demonstrators; three of them were wounded.

Egypt-PLO Plan for Taking Over Gaza Reported

TA2503100093 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 25 Mar 93 pp 1, 4

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Excerpt] Egypt and the PLO have formulated a plan for accepting delivery of the Gaza Strip from Israel. According to the plan, entitled "Giving Protection to Palestinians in the Territories," the PLO would take over control of the Gaza Strip under UN auspices, and a UN force would take part in the enforcement of order in the Gaza Strip.

Some 500 residents of Gaza slated to become the local police force have been training in the police academy in Cairo for the past two months. Palestinian sources in the territories told our correspondent that the aforementioned UN force could include Egyptian units. They

added that the issue was raised in the meeting between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali in New York, but Rabin rejected the idea, arguing that we should adhere to the Madrid formula. [passage omitted]

Funds Allocated To Create Employment System in Gaza

TA2503122693 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 25 Mar 93 p 11

[Report by Alex Fishman]

[Excerpt] The construction of an electronic fence to separate the Qatif Bloc from Khan Yunus and the southern Gaza Strip began recently. The fence will require a vast outlay and will be financed by the Jewish Agency and the Defense Ministry.

In keeping with the defense establishment's promise to the Qatif Bloc settlers, fences have been reinforced around the settlements and a sum has been allocated out of the defense budget to complete the paving of another internal road in the Qatif Bloc.

The Finance Ministry recently approved the first installment of a 200-million-shekel allocation out of the state budget to create an employment infrastructure in the Gaza Strip. The first installment is meant to cover the expenses incurred in the first quarter of 1993 to build an industrial infrastructure in the Gaza Strip.

This is the first time that the Israeli Government has approved such a large allocation out of the state budget for infrastructure work in the Arab sector beyond the Green Line.

In the past few weeks, the finance and defense ministers have been discussing the recommendation of the coordinator of activities in the territories to invest money to ease the lot of the inhabitants of the Gaza Strip and to create jobs.

The defense establishment decided to permit farmers in the Gaza Strip to expand their hothouses.

Procedures for local inhabitants seeking to enlarge their homes will be made easier. The allocation of funds to create sources of employment in the Gaza Strip was approved by Yitzhaq Rabin prior to his trip to the United States. [passage omitted]

Russian Official Arrives on Regional Tour

Briefs Beilin on Talks

TA2503112393 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 25 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Viktor Posuvalyuk, director of the Middle East desk at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, arrived in Jerusalem yesterday following a tour of Arab capitals during which he conferred with Jordan's King Husayn, Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi, and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. He met yesterday with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin and will confer today with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

Posuvalyuk said the difficulties in Russia were essentially "economic" and noted that as soon as his country gets over this crisis, it will increase its involvement in the political process. To that end, Russia wants to enhance the political dialogue with Israel, he said.

The Russian visitor told Beilin he had found among his Arab interlocutors real interest in promoting the peace process. Nevertheless, he said, it is obvious that the Arabs do not want to break pan-Arab "solidarity," and that is why they are hesitant to accept the invitation to the peace talks before the Palestinians do.

Posuvalyuk said that Russia is very worried about the spread of Islamic extremism and believes it extends from the southern flanks of Russia through the Middle East all the way to the western coast of Africa. He noted that Syria is also worried about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, particularly in Iran, Syria [as published], and Sudan.

Meets With Peres

TA2503125193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The head of the Russian Foreign Ministry Department for the Middle East and Africa today discussed with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres ways to combat Muslim fundamentalist terrorism. Viktor Posuvalyuk has been sent on a tour of the Middle Eastern countries taking part in the bilateral talks. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Begin recording] [Katzenell] Viktor Posuvalyuk has had meetings with Lebanon's President al-Hirawi, Syrian Foreign Minister al-Shar', and King Husayn of Jordan. This morning he told Foreign Minister Peres that the Arab governments expect Israel to do more to solve the problem of the expelled Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists. Peres replied that if the Palestinians agree to halt terrorism, Israel will promise never to resort to expulsions again. Posuvalyuk told his Israeli hosts Russia is determined to maintain its role as cosponsor of the peace talks despite what he called the economic problems at home. In public he refused to discuss the events in Moscow:

[Posuvalyuk] We spoke about the bilateral relations between our countries, which were going to improve, and at the same time we spoke in detail about the current situation in the peace process, and we discussed the measures and steps how to push it forward and to make the continuation of the peace process, the peace talks, and the ninth round of the peace talks possible.

[Katzenell] At a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, Posuvalyuk said the hard-liners in Russia—the right wingers, as he called them—are fiercely critical

of the government's rapprochement with Israel and its abandonment of old friends such as Libya and Iraq. At his meeting with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres this morning, Posuvalyuk expressed concern over Muslim extremist terrorism, and the two discussed ways to combat it. [end recording]

Senior Indian Official Arrives, Meets Beilin

TA2403203493 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The director general of the Indian Foreign Ministry arrived in Israel for official talks yesterday. He is accompanied by the official in charge of disarmament and arms control in the Indian Government. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that this is the most senior Indian official to visit Israel since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries last year. It is also the first time the two countries are holding top-level political contacts. India is a nuclear power, and our correspondent has learned that in the meeting today with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin the two raised, among other things, the threat posed by Iran's nuclear development and its long-range missiles. India has good relations with Iran, but the Indian official promised that Israel will not be harmed. He also promised to act in Tehran on behalf of the missing Israeli navigator Ron Arad.

Confers With Peres

TA2503113493 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 25 Mar 93 p 1

[ITIM report]

[Text] India wants to strengthen its relations with Israel, Jyotindra Nath Dixit, director general of the Indian Foreign Ministry, stated yesterday in a meeting with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at his office.

Dixit delivered a message from the Indian foreign minister in which he states that India is pleased with the development of bilateral relations and admits that Israel has been the more open-minded and enterprising of the two countries since they established diplomatic relations. The Indian foreign minister says this is a result of the fast-breaking developments in India and domestic politics. He calls on Israel to be patient because India aspires and plans to enhance its relations with Israel.

Peres noted that he attaches great important to relations with India. He emphasized that he was not referring only to the diplomatic aspect and went on to list three areas in which Israel seeks close cooperation with India: science and technology, agriculture, and economy.

[A report by Hemi Shalev on page 4 of Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 25 March adds that in his meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Dixit said that "despite its cooperation with Iran, India shares Israel's concern about the spread of Islamic fundamentalism and believes that the international community should find a way to solve the problem."

[The report adds that "political sources in Jerusalem do not rule out the possibility that the two countries might exchange information and assessments on the issue in the wake of Dixit's visit."]

Denies Nuclear Reactor Deal With Iran

TA2503121293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] India's foreign secretary, who is equivalent to director general of the Foreign Ministry, has denied the report that his country is considering the sale of a nuclear reactor to Iran. Jyotindra Nath Dixit has been holding talks in Jerusalem with Prime Minister Rabin, Foreign Minister Peres, and other senior officials and Palestinian leaders. It is the first visit by such a senior Indian official to Israel. In an interview with reporter Jack Katzenell, Dixit said there is a convergence of views between Israel and India on issues of arms control:

[Begin recording] [Dixit] You see, both of us—Israel and India—live in a pressured security environment. We are both conscious of the futility of excessive armament or defense expenditure, but at the same time we have to maintain minimal levels of defense preparedness.

[Katzenell] Is there any truth in the report that Iran wishes to buy a nuclear reactor from India?

[Dixit] They wanted an experimental nuclear reactor from us.

[Katzenell] Did you agree?

[Dixit] Look, let me explain. They wanted it approximately three years ago, and then all sorts of things happened in Jammu and Kashmir and various other things, so they have not persisted with this request, and we are very cautious in entering into agreements on the supply of nuclear equipment and technology to anybody, because of the general pressure on India for nonproliferation nowadays. [end recording]

Sudanese Official Warns Against Aid to Rebels

TA2403161993

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1305 GMT on 24 March during its daily "Foreign Affairs Reel" reports on an interview with "'Abd-al-Wahab al-Afandi, a senior Sudanese official," by freelance journalist Yehoshu'a Hame'iri on an unspecified date, in London. The report contains recorded passages of al-Afandi in English.

The official is introduced as "'Abd-al-Wahab al-Afandi, who wrote a book entitled 'The al-Turabi Revolution'"; he "speaks for Hassan al-Turabi; is very involved in the Sudanese decisionmaking process; is one of the leaders

of the Sudanese Islamic party: and is al-Turabi's liaison with the Iranians in London."

Asked whether granting an interview with the Israeli media should be considered a gesture of Sudanese openness toward Israel, al-Afandi says he does not represent the Sudanese Government. In a recorded passage he adds: "I would not be averse to this being taken as gesture of goodwill on my part and the trend I represent, but on the other hand I am speaking to the media, and as people with a message we welcome any dialogue with anybody who wants to listen to what we have to say."

Questioned on the Sudanese stand regarding the Palestinian Muslim organizations—some of which engage in terror— Al-Afandi says they "regard Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the other movements which are fighting occupation as people who are fighting a legitimate cause and we would, of course, like this issue to be resolved peacefully, if possible. But, we unequivocally condemn any attacks on civilians, whether by these groups or by any other party, especially by the Army." Asked whether the Sudanese extend assistance to these groups, he says: "No, we are not. We cannot afford to give any support or direct assistance to anybody who is not from Sudan. We have enough problems to deal with. We allow refugees, of course, to come and stay in our country. We welcome them because, of course, had they the right to stay in their country, they would not be coming to us."

Hame'iri says he asked al-Afandi about the rumor that "the blind Egyptian Muslim leader plans to seek refuge in Sudan, if he expelled from the United States. Al-Afandi says in response: "What Shaykh is that? We have never heard of anybody. We do not know the name you are speaking about so I cannot tell you. If you give me a name, we can investigate and see if you are right. We are sure that we are not harboring any terrorists." "We will not do this in the future as well," Hame'iri continues in Hebrew, adding "our country's record on this issue is very clean. No individual, party, or government in Sudan have ever been involved in terror, and this is how we would like it stay."

Asked about the links between Sudan and Iran, al-Afandi says: "The connections with Iran have been overplayed, I think, out of all proportions. We are not getting any substantial assistance from Iran, which is why I am revealing to you this now. And, we are friendly towards the government there and the people, as we are friendly to anybody who is friendly towards us."

Moving to domestic affairs, Hame'iri asks about the truth in the reports that the Sudanese Government is attempting to force the Islamic law on the southern non-Muslim part of the country. Al-Afandi denies that Islamic law is applied to non-Muslims in the south, saying that even some people in the north get exempted in some cases. He adds: "As regards the policy toward the south, as you might know, there is now a cease-fire which has been announced by the rebel movement, and this has been reciprocated."

At this point, studio announcer Gid'on Remez reports that last week, Hame'iri delivered a request from one of the rebel movements to the prime minister's bureau asking for humanitarian aid for the hungry in southern Sudan. Al-Afandi was asked whether his government would allow the passage of such a shipment through government-controlled areas. The Sudanese spokesman says: "No. At the moment we will not accept that, and we hope that your assistance will be confined to humanitarian assistance because we have information that is not what your assistance to these groups are. And, as you were saying a while ago that you were concerned about our support to groups that might be opposed to you, that also would put you in direct confrontation with us."

Deportees Reject Reported U.S.-Israeli Deal on Return

NC2403182493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpts] The Palestinian deportees today rejected a reported Israeli promise of progress on their return if the Palestinians agree to attend the peace talks in Washington next month.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, leader of the 396 besieged deportees, said the United States is again trying to ignore a UN resolution demanding their immediate return to their homes. [passage omitted]

The Palestinian deportees today celebrated the second day of 'Id al-Fitr at their mountainside camp. Al-Rantisi told journalists: Very regrettably, the United States is using a new method, working on a new deal with Israel on the deportees. But we say Security Council Resolution 799 contains no precondition that if the Palestinian delegation attends the talks, the resolution will be implemented, and if not, the resolution will not be implemented.

Al-Rantisi added: I am surprised at this method and at this flagrant circumvention of the Security Council resolution, especially as we rejected and buried the old package and will reject every package that conflicts with Resolution 799.

In February, the deportees rejected an American-Israeli proposal for the immediate return of 100 deportees and the reduction of others' deportation terms to a year at most.

Palestinian negotiators are scheduled to meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington on Friday [26 March] to discuss resuming the peace talks. Al-Rantisi said the deportees do not pin hopes on the meeting with Christopher, because Washington supports Israel. He added: We did not authorize anyone to speak for our cause, certainly not the Palestinian delegation. So no one can say what solution we will accept.

Al-Rantisi said the Palestinian people will oppose any new deal. He called for a permanent Palestinian withdrawal from the peace talks. [passage omitted]

Al-Hariri Leaves for France on Private Visit

NC2403202793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri left Beirut for Paris this evening on a private family trip. He will spend the 'Id al-Fitr holiday with his family, now in Paris. He will return to Beirut at the end of the week.

Two Said Injured in Israeli Air Force Raid

NC2403180693 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Security sources in the south said the Israeli Air Force, in its first raid on Lebanon this year, launched a rocket attack against a resistance position Wednesday [24 March], injuring two people. The sources said two planes escorted by two others fired 10 missiles on a Hizballah position hidden behind trees just outside the occupied strip. The missiles scored direct hits and columns of black smoke rose in the air over the position, situated across a post for the Israeli-sponsored Lahd militias on the hill of Sujud in southern Lebanon.

The sources added that Hizballah ambulances transported at least two wounded people after the Israeli warplanes' first raid on Lebanon this year. Recently Israel has been using helicopters to attack resistance positions. A Hizballah spokesman in Beirut confirmed the raid on Hizballah fighters in the south but said he had no information of any casualties. [passage omitted]

Israeli Forces Release Citizen, 2 Soldiers

NC2503093393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Reports from the south indicate that the Israeli forces have released three citizens who they arrested in al-Habbariyah on 4 March. They are Lebanese Army soldiers Ayyub Mahmud Abu-Ayyub and 'Ali Bin-'Isa and citizen Ahmad Mahmud Abu-'Ammar.

Afghanistan

Iranian Minister Meets With Premier Hekmatyar

LD2403182293 Tehran IRNA in English 1633 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Kabul, March 24, IRNA—Latest Afghan development and the trend of implementation of Islamabad peace treaty were discussed by Afghan Premier Golboddin Hekmatyar and visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi here Tuesday [23 March].

The newly-appointed premier termed as "successful" the recent Jalalabad peace talks between Afghan top party leaders which were aimed at working out a framework for the Afghan Cabinet members. He briefed Borujerdi on developements of Jalalabad meeting which he said was positively viewed by all participating parties.

To finalize the formation of the Cabinet, Hekmatyar said, a meeting is to be held with President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

On Kabul clashes, Hekmatyar said that Afghan Government regretted over attacks launched against Wahdat-i-Islami (Islamic Unity) party in the capital and condemned the act.

Borujerdi stressed that the Islamic Republic's policy is to help its eastern neighbor in restoring peace and security in the country. He said that Iran hopes that Afghan party leaders would soon reach a solution over the peace treaty to replace disorder and clashes with peace and stability.

The Iranian official informed Hekmatyar of Iran's concern over the continuation of clashes in Kabul.

Iranian Minister, Afghan Party Leader Discuss Cabinet

LD2403175793 Tehran IRNA in English 1628 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Kabul, March 24, IRNA—Visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi met with senior Wahdat-i-Islami (Islamic Unity) party leader Ayatollah Fazil here Wednesday and discussed issues related to formation of the Afghan Cabinet.

Borujerdi told IRNA after the talks that the ayatollah was satisfied over the progress in the process of the Cabinet formation and hoped that administration of three ministries, including a key one, would be trusted with his party.

Both Borujerdi and Fazil stressed the need to put an end to the infightings and establish a permanent ceasefire in Afghanistan.

The Iranian official said that he had launched extensive efforts to enforce a durable ceasefire and hoped that a lasting ceasefire would be established in the blessed day of Eid-e Fetr.

Borujerdi added that he expected that all Afghan groups join hands to prevent further clashes.

India

17th Suspect Arrested in Bombay Bombings

BK2503031093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] The Bombay police have arrested one more person in connection with the recent bomb explosions in the city. Agency reports quoting police sources say that the arrested person is suspected to have taken part in transporting explosives into the city. With this, 17 persons have been taken into custody in connection with the blast.

Pakistan Urged To Help in Turning Over Bombing Suspects

BK2503032893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Commentary by former foreign secretary Muchkund Dubey]

[Text] The external affairs minister of India informed parliament yesterday that India has sought the cooperation of the Government of Pakistan in locating and sending back to India the six members of the Memon family who are the prime suspects in masterminding and carrying out the recent Bombay blasts. The ghastly incident of Bombay has shaken the conscience of right-thinking people all over the world who expect the culprits to be nabbed and punished. Country after country are becoming victims of such wanton and mindless violence and Pakistan itself is not immune from it. We therefore hope that Pakistan would rise to the occasion and by its prompt, positive, and unambiguous response to the request of the Government of India would emphatically demonstrate that it cannot condone acts of violence.

The prime minister of Pakistan has condemned the Bombay incident and recently the Government of Pakistan has decided to set up a cell to deal with international terrorism. This has been done in the context of Pakistan having been put on the watchlist of the United States Government of countries suspected of indulging in state terrorism. By taking prompt and unhesitating action on the Indian request, Pakistan will be able to establish its credibility as a responsible member of the international community.

Pakistan's helpful action will also be of great importance at the present critical juncture of Indo-Pak relations, which have suffered an all-round deterioration recently and are stagnating for quite some time. Everywhere the

question is asked what must be done to ensure that these relations take a turn for the better. The Indian request for help provides a golden opportunity for a breakthrough in Indo-Pak relations. It will also be a very good augury for the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit which is likely to be held in Dhaka in two weeks from now. And for a possible meeting there between Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Narasimha Rao for picking up the threads of Indo-Pak relations which have been lying shattered for almost a year now.

Satellite Forced To Cancel Pakistan TV Lease

BK2403132793 Bombay NAVBHARAT TIMES in Hindi 13 Mar 93 p 5

[By Sailesh]

[Text] New Delhi 12 March. The Indian Government has renewed its high-level efforts to stop Pakistan Television broadcasts from the Asiasat. Information and Broadcasting Secretary Rajkumar Bhargava has been sent to Hong Kong on an important mission for this purpose. According to sources, Bhargava will also try to acquire a transponder for Indian Television—Doordarshan. Pakistan Television's lease on Asiasat expires on 31 March.

Asiasat satellite broadcasts STAR TV programs. These programs can be seen throughout the country by dish antennas and cables. India is annoyed with Pakistan Television's 'anti-Indian' propaganda broadcast through this satellite. The Indian Government has filed many complaints against Pakistan against STAR TV management. During the recent India-English cricket broadcasts, many anti-Indian programs were shown on the Pakistan Television channel. This is the main cause of India's latest annoyance. Earlier, during Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front leader Amanullah Khan's Kashmir March movement, Pakistan Television broadcast BBC reports accompanied with anti-Indian comments. This created a furor. On India's objections, the company managing STAR TV, Hutch Vision, warned the Pakistan Government about canceling its lease. The Pakistan Government in response to the Hutch Vision notice said that according to the contract it has full freedom to broadcast its programs. Ever since, the Indian Government has put continuous pressure on Asiasat to cancel its lease of a transponder to Pakistan Television.

Different channels of STAR TV are generating a large sum of advertisement revenues from India. That is why it does not want to spoil its relations with the Indian Government. Recently, STAR TV started its Hindi-language ZEE TV channel. This channel has also earned quite a lot from Indian advertisements. On the other hand, advertisements from Pakistan are very limited.

According to Information and Broadcasting Ministry sources, the government is now taking renewed interest in leasing a transponder on Asiasat for Doordarshan. In fact, a plan was made about 18 months ago to acquire a transponder on Asiasat for Doordarshan. Hutch Vision demanded $250,000 for that; the Indian Government was willing to pay $175,000. The negotiations were deadlocked. The ministry sources say acquiring a transponder on Asiasat will be in the interest of Doordarshan. Programs broadcast through Asiasat can be seen throughout Asia and the Arab world. Through this arrangement, Doordarshan programs will reach many other countries, including Pakistan. Its programs will also be seen via the dish antennas now being used to receive SATR TV programs. The Information and Broadcasting Ministry wants to start a second national channel through satellite in a joint field. A Plan also exists to make available Metro Channel programs throughout the country via satellite. A transponder on Asiasat could be used for the second national channel or Metro Channel. Doordarshan already has many transponders available on INSAT-2A.

Relations With U.S. Analyzed

BK2403122793 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 8 Mar 93 p 11

[Article by former Foreign Secretary Muchkund Dubey]

[Text] The United States has always been one of the most important factors in India's foreign policy calculations. Despite major changes in the global environment, the US remains the world's pre-eminent political and economic power. This status is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. For India, the US is the largest trading partner and a critical source of technology. Due to its major involvement with countries and regions in our neighbourhood, the US is able to exert considerable influence on India's security environment.

India and the USA have differed in their strategic perceptions in the past. These differences basically emanated from geo-political factors but were also due to Cold War considerations. It became necessary in the post-Cold War period to have a fresh look at the mutual relationship free from the blinkers of the Cold War.

The review of the relationship was undertaken right in earnest and is still continuing. The attitudes on both sides have undergone subtle as well as not so subtle changes and a series of adjustments in the policies towards each other have been made. We have been looking for possibilities of collaboration in areas, including defence, where we had shunned co-operation in the past. We have been identifying issues of common interest in an unbiased fashion and unfettered manner. A number of important changes have been made and initiatives taken recently:

a) India supported the US-led Security Council embargo on Iraq and implemented it faithfully;

b) India permitted overflights and refuelling facilities for US transport aircraft engaged in the Gulf operation;

c) India supported most of the Security Council resolutions sponsored by the US and its allies, relating to the Gulf crisis;

d) India voted in favour of repealing the UN General Assembly resolution condemning Zionism as a form of racism;

e) India established full diplomatic relationship with Israel;

f) Both the countries established institutional arrangement for military co-operation on a continuing basis;

g) The US supported all Indian applications for loans and assistance from the IMF, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank during the period of its reserve crisis and for its adjustment programme and persuaded other industrialised countries to do the same;

h) There were some encouraging shifts from India's standpoint, in US attitude towards Pakistan particularly on the Kashmir issue. The US statements on Kashmir no longer mention plebiscite and the US has discouraged Pakistan from taking the Kashmir issue to the Security Council. It has also taken a forthright position against Pakistan's military assistance to and other forms of association with the militants in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. The US has also stopped extending military aid to Pakistan except the supply of selected categories of spare parts on a commercial basis.

All the above changes are not due to the rediscovery by the two countries of each other after the end of the Cold War. Quite a few of them have taken place due to autonomous reasons. For example, India had its own reasons to vote for the Security Council resolutions relating to the Gulf crisis. India's establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel was a necessary corrective of foreign policy long overdue. India was looking for a proper timing and it got the opportunity after the Gulf War. Similarly, the change in US attitude towards Pakistan is due to the change in the strategic situation in that part of Asia.

In the continuing dialogue with the United States to identify mutual interests, a number of commonalities have been highlighted:

a) India and the US are the two largest democracies in the world and both are fully committed to the observance of basic human rights;

b) Both of them have a common interest in containing Islamic fundamentalism because, above all, it militates against democratic principles and human rights and can be a destabilising factor;

c) Both the countries are commonly dependent on the Middle East oil and hence they have common interest in keeping open the sea lanes and other routes to the Middle East;

d) They have common concern with the issues of environment, drug trafficking, terrorism and AIDS. There is, however, apparent conflict in their respective approaches to tackling the environmental issues;

e) They have mutual interest in the economic field, but there are conflicts here too; and it is by no means going to be an easy task to manage this aspect of the relationship;

Going beyond the above apparent commonalities, if there is a greater convergence of the strategic objectives of the two countries through a process of dialogue it may be possible for India to undertake common security responsibilities in regions which are closer to India and where it will be too expensive or operationally too complicated for the US to have a military presence. We can also find complementarities in the conduct of our bilateral relations with third countries.

It must, however, be recognised that India and the US have an apparent divergence of interest on a number of vital issues:

a) The US views India's projection as a major power as inimical to its global interest. It, therefore, would not like to see India emerge as a nuclear weapon power. It will thus continue to put pressure on India to give up its nuclear option. For the same reason, the US would like India to give up its missile programmes having the potentiality of enabling India to develop a capability to deploy medium-range and strategic weapons. The US can, therefore, be expected to be more and more restrictive in the transfer of dual- purpose technologies to India. This will remain a continuing source of conflict of interest;

c) The US is likely to pursue more vigorously its objective of seeing the fullest possible observance of human rights in India, including in Kashmir. In particular, it will insist on India giving access to international human rights groups like the Amnesty International, Asia Watch etc. This is regarded by India as an interference in its domestic affairs and will remain a source of friction;

d) In the economic field, the US would expect India to provide greater access to its market for US goods and services. India is in any case moving forward in these directions as a part of its structural adjustment programme. But the US would not be happy with half-hearted measures and would like India to go the whole hog. This will, in the medium and long run, make India even more vulnerable to the US in the political and security fields, leaving India no option but to succumb to US pressure;

e) As of now, there is an apparent divergence in the global strategic objectives of India and the USA in the following respects:

(i) The US is working, as the leading member of the "new alliance", for a hegemonistic world order. It would not

like India to come in the way of this objective. On the other hand, India is committed to work for an equitable world order.

(ii) The US, along with its allies, wants to maintain the ad hoc discriminatory regimes for the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction even after universal disarmament treaties covering these weapons are concluded. India regards these regimes as discriminatory and the method of their application arbitrary and would, therefore, like them to go at least after the entry into force of universal disarmament treaties.

(iii) India is for a complete elimination of nuclear weapons, whereas the US is determined to retain its nuclear arsenal as a deterrence against delinquent Third World countries.

(iv) India would like the future world order to be underpinned by multilateralism under the United Nations; the US would like to keep open its option of unilateral action, bilateral coercion and exclusive regional and other arrangements in the economic and security fields.

(v) India would work for restoring to the UN its legitimate role in the economic field and bringing back to the UN agenda hard-core economic issues, whereas the USA's entire effort has been successfully to transfer these issues to the IMF, World Bank and GATT.

There should be a prior understanding between India and the US that there are certain issues on which their perceptions will continue to differ, but that should not come in the way of the two countries pursuing a vigorous and dynamic bilateral relationship.

India, on its part, should lower—it has already started doing so—its rhetoric on these issues in bilateral and multilateral discussions without, in any way, flinching from its basic positions.

At the same time, the bilateral dialogue to widen the area of agreement on strategic objectives should continue at all levels, including at the Summit level. In this dialogue, the enunciation of the Indian position could be somewhat on the following lines:

a) In adopting the positions that we have on global issues, we have no intention to hurt US interests;

b) As democracies, we should show tolerance, if not understanding, of each other's views;

c) We should continue to offer to the US the lure of our market. We should explain to them that we would continue to liberalise as we have so far, because it is in our own interest to do so. But we have, at the same time to avoid social tension and maintain political stability. This may warrant selective departures from the path of liberalisation.

d) On the transfer of dual-purpose technologies, we should emphasise that in the sphere of most of these technologies, India is a country which has already arrived. In return we should give to the US an informal assurance that we will observe the same discipline as its allies do, in relation to the export of sensitive technologies to third countries.

e) On the question of nuclear and missile proliferation, no Government of India would find it politically feasible to give up the nuclear option. Besides, India stands on a very different footing here because of its unique security environment, its track record of not proliferating to other countries and its proven indigenous capability which can't be reversed.

Trade Pact Signed With Czech Republic 15 Mar

BK2503022593 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 16 Mar 93 p 17

[Text] New Delhi—India and Czech Republic on Monday signed an agreement to promote further increase and diversification in trade between the two countries on a long term and stable basis.

According to the agreement which will be valid for five years, all payments of a commercial and non-commercial nature between the two countries will be made in freely convertible currencies with effect from January 1 this year.

The agreement provides for the grant of most favoured nation status to each other import and export of goods and services from each other on the basis of countertrade, leasing and buy-back arrangements or any other internationally recognised form of business cooperation and establishment of joint ventures. It also provides for promotion of trade between the two countries by direct contacts, holding of fairs and exhibitions and supply of information on all aspects of trade and economic cooperation.

All payments arising out of the deals before Decemnber 31, 1992 will continue to be effected in non-convertible Indian rupee.

A joint commiittee comprising representatives of both sides may be set up for reviewing implementation of this agreement and for examining the possibilities of increasing and diversifying mutual trade and economic relations between the two countries.

Indo-Czechslovak trade in 1991-92 amounted to Rs [rupees] 466.2 crore of which India's exports to that country amounted to Rs 352.2 crore.

Government Urged To Improve Kashmir Policy

BK2503010693 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 10 Mar 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Hasten Slowly In Kashmir"]

[Text] The reported offer of resignation by the Jammu and Kashmir Governor, Mr Girish Chandra Saxena, further muddies the situation in the terrorist-stricken valley. And it reveals the confusion that prevails in the

highest echelons of the Central Government as to how best to handle the affairs in the sensitive State. Mr Saxena, according to a report in INDIAN EXPRESS, offered his resignation to the Prime Minister in protest against the manner in which, the Union Minister of State for Home, Mr Rajesh Pilot, was seeking to conduct the Kashmir affairs. Quite clearly, the J&K [Jammu and Kashmir] Governor did not share Mr Pilot's enthusiasm for instant solutions to what is by all accounts a deep-seated problem with international ramifications. It was not merely a question of differing perceptions; it appeared to Mr Saxena and several others familiar with the ground realities in the valley that the junior Minister for Home had got his entire diagnosis of the Kashmir problem wrong to be able to come up with a workable prescription.

Doubtless, ideally the democratic process ought to be resumed in the troubled State. But given the extent of alienation in the valley and the apparent hold of the secessionist militants on the local populace, it is rash to think in terms of an early poll to bring Kashmir back on the rails. Ironically enough, Mr Pilot seeks to do this through the aegis of a politician who may already have become irrelevant to Jammu and Kashmir. Dr Farooq Abudllah, having contributed in no small measure to the degradation of the Kashmir polity when he headed the State administration, cannot be expected to play any useful role in its affairs at this juncture. Truly, if the Kashmir problem is mainly confined to the valley, then any solution that has a fair chance of succeeding will have to be worked out with the representatives of the people there. Dr Abdullah, one is afraid, is not even ordinarily a resident of the valley! Admittedly, not unlike Punjab, any search for breaking the impasse in Kashmir will require two broad elements, viz. political and administrative. In other words, while not giving any quarter to the militants on the ground, the Centre may well pursue the search for ways to resume the political process in the State. All this, however, has to be a part of a carefully spelt out policy on Kashmir of which there is no evidence as yet. It is the absence of such a policy which encourages individuals to follow their own fancies. The result is controversy which does no one any good. The Government, therefore will do well to announce such a policy without delay. Meanwhile, Mr Pilot, who seems to be in a hurry to become a leader in his own right, will be well advised not to bypass the J&K administration in his search for instant glory. He should desist from any step that weakens the resolve of the administration to eliminate terrorism in Kashmir.

MPs Clash Over Film on Infiltration of Bangladeshis

BK2403161293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] Left Party and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members clashed in the Lok Sabha today over Doordarshan [television] giving a contract to a private studio for making a film on infiltration from Bangladesh. Raising the issue during zero hour, Mrs Malini Bhattacharya, CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], said that it was the same studio which filmed the Ayodhya events on 6 December and circulated them all over the country, leading to tension. She wanted a statement from the government on the issue. The BJP members objected to the raising of the issue, saying that infiltration from Bangladesh is posing a threat to the security of the country.

Problems for Army With Arjun Tank Project Predicted

BK2503023793 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 16 Mar 93 p 9

[By Pravin Sawhney: "Arjun tank lands army in a tight spot"]

[Text] New Delhi—It is indeed a difficult situation for the Army. Having accepted the Arjun tank pre-maturely, it will now have to pay for further development of the project, the end product of which is still uncertain, according to authoritative sources.

Contrary to the recent announcement made by former defence minister Sharad Pawar, after witnessing limited Arjun trials of the only two manufactured pre-production (PP) models 11 and 12, the tank design will not be frozen for limited series production. To save itself embarrassment, the DRDO [Defense Research Development Organization] has now suggested that some part designs, after the recent successful PP-11 and 12 models performance may be frozen. But this is not viable. Till the tank does not perform satisfactorily as a whole, limited design freezing does not make sense.

The DRDO plans manufacturing another nine PP models, which will then go through the user and troop trials, in all terrains including the still untested watered fields of Punjab, which is a major battlefield (remember Khem Karan in the 1971 war). The existing PP- 11 and 12 models will undergo hot weather confirmatory trials this summer in the Thar to vindicate the major flaws witnessed during summer 1992 trials. All the shortcomings observed during the requisite series of trials will be sought to be rectified, making design freezing for the Mark 1 Arjun production unlikely until 1995.

With the premature acceptance of Arjun, the Army can no longer reject it. It can at best discuss major and minor changes affecting its General Staff Qualitative Requirements (GSQR) and other developmental stages with the DRDO.

Disconcertingly enough, at a time of frozen defence budget, inadequate even for bare maintenance, the Army will now pay for the further development stages of the tank. The ministry, through a master-stroke of getting the Army to accept the tank, has made, at least three gains. First, having already spent Rs [rupees] 240 crore of the total Government-sanctioned Rs 280 crore for the Arjun development stage, the ministry will now get the

Army to fund further PP models and associated trials cost. The Arjun project was commenced in 1974 with an initial cost of Rs 15.5 crore. In 1983, after an Arjun model was shown to select MPs of the defence consultative committee, the CCPA [expansion unknown] had sanctioned only Rs 280 crore for the entire development stage of the project.

Secondly, the Arjun tank is now the Army's responsibility. Having given the clearance to the DRDO to enter series production, it is the Army, which will now battle to make its combat units satisfied with the tank, even when doubts have arisen over basic GSQR parameters, like tank weight with full combat load, excessive engine derating, height of the tank because of an unreliable HSU [expansion unknown] system , and accuracy of primary APFSDS [expansion unknown] ammunition needed against strong-points and blinkers. The Army has asked the DRDO to make two PP tanks with torsion-bar type suspension, as logistics support of large quantities of inert gas required for the HSU may be difficult in the deserts.

The DRDO can take credit for having produced an user accepted indigenously designed tank of world class standards. They already profess that weapon system design and its enhancement is an incremental process. This is true, but only after the first project design is frozen and Mark-1 series production commenced.

While the fate of the final Arjun tank will hang in balance, the Army will remain in a quandry over its main battle tank [MBT]—be it the existing T-72M1 tank or the future Arjun. This will affect the fate of the indigenously assembled T-72M1 tank itself, and have a cascading effect on other tanks in the armoury .

With assembly kits of T-72 tank still erratically coming from Russia, notwithstanding the series of written protocols signed during the visit of Mr Boris Yeltsin, India needs to take some hard decisions over levels of production and indigenisation of the existing MBT. Moreover, the fate of the Vijayanta tanks, whose life was selectively enhanced in 1988 by 15 years through a arbitrary Government decision, hangs in the balance. And the T-SS tank fleet is in dire need of upgradations of simplified fire control systems and night fighting capabilities.

Iran

Khamene'i Speaks in Mashhad on West's 'Plots'

NC2503090293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the great leader of the Islamic revolution, arrived in the holy city of Mashhad yesterday afternoon. He addressed a large gathering of local residents and pilgrims to the shrine of Imam Musa Reza—peace be upon him—which was held in the hallowed courtyard named after Imam Khomeyni—may God be pleased with him.

In his profound remarks, Ayatollah Khamene'i elaborated on the reasons for the hostility of the enemies of Islam towards Iran and stressed the need for the people to remain vigilant and united in the face of the treachery and plots of the powers of arrogance.

The great leader referred to Koranic verses in support of his remarks and said: In the Holy Koran, which is a comprehensive book of life, government, politics, and inspiration for Muslims, the story of Satan has been repeated frequently. In drawing our attention to this psychological issue in a precise manner, God Almighty warns human beings that they will encounter Satan during their lives. Humans are never without enemies, and in our evolution as an Islamic society we must be aware of Satan as an enemy lying in wait, and of the forces of chaos.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i described the Islamic revolution as a great, popular, enemy-destroying force and explained the reasons why the Islamic Republic has made enemies. He said: The arrogant powers and enemies lying in ambush are furious and indignant because the Iranian nation has not permitted them to encroach on their homeland. The superpowers want us to sacrifice our national interests for their interests; to permit U.S. advisers to dominate our Army and Armed Forces; to place oil—which is our primary source of wealth—free of charge at the disposal of Western consumers and industries. If this were done, Iran would not have any enemies. Human conscience and saner counsels, however, would never permit any nation to place its interests, destiny, freedom, independence, oil, subterranean resources, government, and all else at the disposal of gluttonous aggressors merely for the purpose of not making enemies.

The leader of the Islamic revolution deemed the animosity of the United States and great arrogant powers against the late imam and the combatant youth, who are imbued with revolutionary sentiments, a natural reaction. He stated: We did not carve out any enemies, but merely demanded our rights. The Iranian nation is determined to remain in control of its own home, its land, interests, wealth, national resources, life, and destiny. This is essential for an established nation. The Iranian revolution has created enemies because it dared to cut off the hands of international plunderers and favor the interests of the Iranian nation over those of the foreigners.

The Islamic Republic continues to resist the covetous designs of the United States, Europe, other domineering powers, and of the magnates of the multinational conglomerates in a heroic manner. It will never tolerate any belligerence toward, interference in, or infiltration of Islamic Iran.

In another part of his remarks, the great leader termed any dealings or negotiations by Arabs with the Zionist

regime as completely detrimental to the Palestinian nation and said: The compromising talks which are in progress on the Palestine issue mean that henceforth the Palestinians do not have any right to return to their birthplaces and homes. The Palestinians are the rightful owners of their homes and have been forced from their hearths by deceit, dissimulation, and the use of the services of international powers and their support. Today, however, Palestinian youths and children, inspired by the general Muslim awakening and the lessons they have learned from the great Islamic revolution in Iran, continue in their struggle by using stones. This struggle will not always be with mere stones, and the future heralds glad tidings of a bleak era for the Zionists.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i then alluded to the tactics of intimidation, treachery, and enticement to achieve the convocation of talks and compromise between the Arabs and the Zionist regime. He denounced the Arab regimes participating in the talks with the Zionist regime and asserted: The objective of these talks is to accord official recognition to the usurpist Jerusalem regime. This is because, from the view of the powers of arrogance, such a situation would mean the end of the Palestinian struggle. It is possible that the Arab governments may have succumbed to the pressure of intimidation and bribery, perhaps because of their slumbering consciences, or simply because they lack the strength to resist the United States over participating in these talks. But the question is: Why should the opposition of Iran and the Iranian Muslim nation to these talks affect the West to this extent; in such a manner that Western governments continue to warn us against opposition to these compromising talks in all political circles?

The leader of the Islamic revolution stressed the need for vigilance and awareness on the part of the Islamic system against the treachery of the enemies of Islam and stated: The free nation and the independent Government of Islamic Iran have simply declared their stance on the compromising talks with the Zionist regime, without dispatching or deploying any troops. This has pitched our enemies against the Islamic Republic. They want us to remain silent in the face of a major injustice, but an independent, Islamic, and free system and a combatant nation which is not afraid of any power remains alert in the face of its enemies because it draws its inspiration from the Holy Koran and will never be unaware of their presence.

The great leader of the revolution recalled the efforts of the powers of world arrogance to harm Iran politically, economically, culturally, and security-wise and added: Alertness, solidarity, and acting correctly according to one's obligations undermine the schemes of Satan. The great and resistant Iranian nation in the course of the past 14 years has managed—despite such efforts on the part of Satan—to repeatedly rub his nose in the dust of humiliation and to keep him scared and weak. As long as we remain united, present on the scene, and close to God Almighty and continue to enjoin virtue and prohibit vice; as long as we are blessed by the bounties of the month of Ramadan, hajj to the house of God, and the mosques and congregational prayers; as long as the devout and combatant basiji youths continue treading the path of God; and as long as we follow the exhortations of our great imam, our nation will never be daunted by enemies and greater or lesser powers.

In conclusion, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i emphasized valor, identifying one's enemies, and appreciation on the part of the country's officials for the people and divine blessings. He deemed the attainment of the lofty objectives of the Islamic revolution possible under the aegis of the people's and officials' unity and solidarity, with divine guidance and the dear Koran.

According to this report, prior to the address by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Va'ez Tabasi, deputy of the Vali-ye Faqih [supreme jurisconsult] and custodian of the Holy Razavi Shrine, delivered a short speech and welcomed the great leader of the revolution to the holy city of Mashhad. He highlighted the deep emotional, ideological, and spiritual bond between the people and the imamate of the Islamic society as the fundamental factor in attaining the objectives of the Islamic revolution.

Khamene'i Stresses Need for Muslim Unity

LD2403141493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution, this morning met with the officials and leading figures of the various departments of the system of the Islamic Republic. He made a speech stressing the need for mutual understanding and cooperation among the Islamic countries to confront the anti-Islamic conspiracies of arrogant powers, and announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to achieve understanding with Islamic countries to solve the problems of the world of Islam.

In this meeting, the esteemed leader expressed his felicitations for the blessed 'Id al-Fitr to all the Muslims of the world and to the proud Iranian nation. Stressing the need for change and transformation inside each individual and society, he said: What forms the major basis and motive for the movement and success of each nation is to renovate and strengthen its intellectual, spiritual, and ideological foundations. It is on this basis that Islam stresses that advancement toward material and spiritual aspirations and the solution of the problems of Islamic societies is conditional upon a profound change inside Muslim individuals and societies.

His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i described the present state of the Muslims as one of the worst situations ever experienced in the course of history. He said: What is happening today in Palestine, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Tajikistan, India, and some other countries are among the problems which

the world of Islam is afflicted with, despite the possession of vast natural and human resources and capabilities. However, disunity and dissension among the Muslims is the greatest affliction whose solution is among the urgent needs of the world of Islam.

Stressing the importance of unity and solidarity among the Muslim nations, the leader of the revolution said: The goal of Islamic unity is to create understanding, cohesion, and cooperation among all the members of the Islamic ummah and Muslim governments. The entire Islamic region is a very sensitive region in the political geography of the world. Therefore, Muslim governments should have harmony and understanding in solving the problems. To this end, the Islamic Republic of Iran extends a hand of friendship and fraternity toward all Muslim nations.

At the end of his speech, the esteemed leader urged Muslim governments to make use of the present opportunities for the sake of the interest of their nations and for the solution of the problems of the Islamic ummah; because the great Islamic ummah will not tolerate for long what is besetting the Muslims today.

Before the remarks of the leader of the Islamic revolution, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his felicitations for the blessed 'Id al-Fitr to the esteemed leader and praised the vigilance, the awareness and the presence of the Muslim Iranian nation in all the various fields.

President Sends Message to Islamic Countries

LD2403134093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani sent messages of congratulations to leaders of the world Islamic countries on the auspicious occasion of 'Id al-Fitr. The message of our country's president, in part, says:

The common points shared by the inhabitants of the Qiblah realms [all Islamic countries that face Qiblah—Mecca—when they pray] are so deep and extensive, compared to their differences, that—irrespective of their race, color, wealth, and geographical location—unity among them is not only possible but is necessary and obligatory because of existing circumstances. Therefore, the holy month of Ramadan can definitely become a factor for creating unity among the Islamic sects, if Muslim leaders use their resources together.

West Said Using Human Rights To Hide Own Conduct

NC2303144993 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 14 Mar 93 p 2

[Commentary by Majid Reza'iyan: "Human Rights—the Open Dossier"]

[Text] The spread of the psychological warfare and political pressure against Iran has entered a new phase. Ostensibly, the West will leave no stone unturned. The issuing of a resolution against Iran by the UN Human Rights Commission is one of the latest displays of this pressure and a link in the chain of the West's widespread psychological war.

The UN Human Rights Commission issued a resolution on violations of human rights in Iran with 23 votes in favor, 11 against, and 13 abstentions. It appears that this time the West is determined to use all its political levers against Iran. The European Parliament's entry into this arena is another reason for this claim. The European Parliament issuing a resolution against Iran in Paris—an entirely political and discriminatory statement—exposes the realities behind the scene of these pressures.

It goes without saying that the United States is at the forefront in planning this psychological war. But dragging Europe into this battle—albeit not in a very serious form—can't continue for long. The prejudiced U.S. behavior on European countries and the tendency toward unification in that pole of power will very soon lead to a greater chasm between Europe and the United States.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that when anything concerns Iran, the West acts as a united front and the propounding of the issue of human rights violations in Iran is one of those instances that, according to Western calculations, are used to distort the political image of the Islamic revolution.

The West's psychological campaign against Iran is very extensive, but human rights violations are chosen probably because:

The West is concerned that Iran and the Islamic revolution enjoy a powerful presence in the minds of freedom-loving peoples. Increasing political pressure against Iran in diplomatic relations has failed to isolate our country in people's minds. The West thinks that bandying human rights violations in Iran about as an "open dossier" can harm Iran's base among popular thinking. What is more important is that it can continue to mask the dual policy of the West in the Balkan and Middle East regions in a haze of ambiguity.

The political contradictions in the U.S. Administration and the social, cultural, and economic disarray of this powerful pole are the main reasons the United States seeks to cover up its domestic crises and contradictions by flaunting external issues.

Let us not forget the West's 14-year-old accusation, saying that by harping on about major extraneous problems, Iran is trying to disguise its internal problems! Today, this trend can easily be seen in the West's actions and stances. By propounding the issue of human rights violations in Iran and by fanning the flames of an extensive psychological war against Iran, what other

impression can the United States convey than that it targets Iran in an attempt to detract from its problems and difficulties at home?

Clinton's hasty stances clearly indicate that U.S. foreign policy under the Democrats has not evolved into a cohesive and consistent one. The Democrats continue to display a predilection for using levers such as human rights to exert political pressure on their opponents.

Islamism has wrested the initiative in two major parts of the world, the Balkans and the Middle East. These are the venues where Islamism is the unifying factor and has inflicted immense political harm on the West by exposing its discrimination and double standards. Propounding human rights violations does not require endorsement by official or international circles, because it is front page news these days with regard to the Balkan and Middle East regions. Massacres and crime in Bosnia-Herzegovina and arrests and collective executions in countries such as Egypt continue. The world may seem to have closed its eyes to them, but there is really no room left for debate.

The United States cannot justify its biased conduct in the crises in these two sensitive areas the realities of which are the best evidence of blatant violations of human rights. Washington and European governments' silence has not left a shred of political prestige for these countries.

Thus it is obvious that raising human rights violations in Iran is merely an effort to divert public opinion from the West's conduct in various regions.

Certain consciences remain awake, such as that of the pope, who heads the Catholic Church. They will not remain silent in the face of these injustices. The West's efforts to keep the file open go against the realities of what is happening in the world today.

The West continues to increase pressure on Iran and will take this campaign to new dimensions. In the past, the objective of these extensive efforts was to motivate Iran to surrender to the United States on the issue of forging relations with Washington. With its decisive and calculated approach, Iran has rejected this and therefore we see the West spreading its psychological war in this new phase.

Assyrian Christians Send Letter to UN

LD2003121093 Tehran IRNA in English 1021 GMT 20 Mar 93

[Text] Orumiyeh (West Azerbaijan), IRNA—The Assyrian Christian Sect in West Azerbaijan Province of Iran in a letter to the United Nations Office in Tehran today regarding Western allegations of violation of minority rights in Iran, and said that in fact they enjoy full constitutional rights.

The letter signed by the bishops of various Assyrian churches and the Chaldean sub-sects said they have full liberty to practice their faith and teach their mother tongue to their children at schools in the Islamic Republic without any restrictions.

They also condemned sentenced apostate Salman Rushdie for his blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses" and denounced any insult against the sanctities of divine religions.

A copy of the letter has been sent to the speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Majles) in Tehran and also to the deputy of the Assyrians at the Majles.

Iraq Accused of 23 Cease-Fire Violations in Jan

LD2303144593 Tehran IRNA in English 1157 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] United Nations HQ (New York), March 23, IRNA—The Iraqi regime has made fresh violations of the terms of the ceasefire regulations in 23 cases between January 4-February 2. Iran's permanent envoy to the U.N. Kamal Kharrazi in a letter to the U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali informed him of the cases of the violation. Three Iraqi aircraft were observed flying over the border area of 'Shohada' valley in 'Halaleh' region while the Iraqi anti-aircraft were active, the letter said.

Movement of Iraqi forces in border areas, digging canals and construction of trenches were among other instances of ceasefire violations.

The letter was circulated as a Security Council document on Monday [22 March].

Rebel Group Committee Formed To Fight Regime

NC2403103193 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Text] Following the tragic group assassination on 17 September 1992 in Berlin [DPK Secretary General Sadeq Sharafkandi, DPK Central Committee member Fatah 'Abdoli, DPK member Homayun Ardalan, and DPK supporter Hoseyn Ahmadi were assassinated] and at the suggestion of the Democratic Party of Kordestan of Iran [DPK], a committee was formed in Paris comprising individuals and representatives of political organizations. This committee, the duty of which is to remove all doubts about the terrorist nature of the Islamic Republic's regime, is completely independent in its decisions and activities and is not affiliated with any group.

The committee's objectives are: to struggle against the Islamic Republic's terrorism; to reveal the regime's crimes; to defend the right to live at home and abroad; and to investigate and follow up the files of assassination victims, irrespective of which political or ideological group they belong to.

Within this context and with these objectives and programs, the Iranian Committee for Struggle Against the Islamic Republic's Terrorism [Komiteh-ye Irani-ye

Mobarezeh Ba Terorizm-e Jomhuri-ye Eslami] calls for the cooperation and support of all compatriots.

[Dated] 17 March 1993, Paris

DPK Issues Statement on Leader's Remarks on Regime

NC2403073893 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 23 Mar 93

[Statement by the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Kordestan, DPK, issued on 18 March 1993]

[Text] In an interview carried on the BBC's evening Persian-language program on 17 March, Comrade Kamal Davudi, the DPK's provisional head in Paris, made some remarks on talks with the regime of the Islamic Republic. We believe a brief explanation on these remarks is necessary.

Comrade Davudi's remarks actually reflect one of our party's political principles: that talks on the wants of the Kurdish people are a method of struggle. However, in order to remove any misunderstanding of his remarks, it should be said that the establishment of a democracy in Iran—one that includes the fulfillment of the rights of the nationalities living in Iran—is impossible within the framework of the Islamic Republic of Iran's rule. The assassinations of our party's secretaries general in Vienna and Berlin and of other Iranian opposition personalities and the regime's actions and policies in the past have proven the validity of this point. Therefore, we believe that talks with such a regime are useless.

[Signed] The DPK Political Bureau

[Date] 18 March 1993

Turkish Kurds Send Message to DPK on Attacks

NC2303091993 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 22 Mar 93

[Message from the Turkish Socialist Party of Kurdistan to the Democratic Party of Iran; date not given]

[Text] Members of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee: On behalf of the Socialist Party of Kurdistan [SPK], we vehemently condemn the 13 and 14 March 1993 bomb and artillery attacks by the Islamic Republic of Iran; we hereby convey our condolences and we wish you success.

Dear comrades, the reactionary Iranian regime, which is a bloodthirsty, murderous, and terrorist regime, has mobilized all its resources and strength and imposed a full-fledged war against our people in Iranian Kordestan, especially against the Democratic Party of Kordestan [DPK] in Iran, in the course of its 14-year rule. However, it could not and will not be able to shatter the people's struggle in Iranian Kordestan.

The blood of 5,000 martyred peshmergas, of 50,000 defenseless people in Kordestan, and of our worthy leaders and pioneers, Dr. Qasemlu and Dr. Sa'id, will not be in vain. Such actions will only bring our struggle for freedom for our people and for the freedom of Kordestan, closer to victory.

The recent attack proves that the regime of the Islamic Republic is floundering in deep crises and foreshadows the regime's downfall. Without any doubt, our people will be liberated from this tyranny.

Esteemed comrades, the Islamic regime thought that with cannons and bombers, it would be able to undermine the ranks and the spirit of the heroic and combatant peshmergas of the DPK in Iran. It did not attain its shameful and base objectives.

On 13 and 14 March, we witnessed the attack on your political bureau at your headquarters, and the heroic and combatant spirit of your peshmergas, under the bombardment and artillery fire of your inhuman enemy. We glimpsed your heroism and resolution during the bombardment. We saw your unique morale and immense control under the artillery fire and the enemy's shells. We also witnessed the terrorist actions of the Islamic Republic and we saw that no amount of fire and bombardment could daunt you from your task and struggle.

We saw that the pioneering vanguards and the aware, knowledgeable, and learned people, resisted and stood steadfast, like a fist of iron in the face of the enemy.

Thousands of blessings on the heroic cadres and the peshmergas who stood firm and resisted with their extraordinary composure under the consecutive attacks of the enemy, and defended the Political Bureau of the DPK. May thousands of blessings be showered on those peshmergas who attained martyrdom!

Once again, we convey our condolences on behalf of all the supporters and members of the SPK, we wish for your victory and prestige, and we give you our blessings. We also pray for the health and welfare of the wounded. Once again our condolences to the families of the martyrs. [Signed] The Socialist Party of Kurdistan, Turkey.

Pakistan

Ambassador to Washington Admits Nuclear Capability

BK2503103193 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, Mrs. Abida Hussain, is reported to have admitted that Pakistan has nuclear weapon capability. PTI [Press Trust of India] says Mrs. Hussain, in an interview, insisted that Pakistan must have such a deterrent against India. The agency further reports that the Pakistan foreign minister in another interview has also admitted to Pak nuclear capability.

Sharif Denies Differences With President

BK2403112493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has said there is no difference whatsoever with the president, for whom he has great regard. He was talking to newsmen on his arrival at Lahore airport from Islamabad this afternoon. He said the impression being created in the press for the last few days was wrong and there was nothing as such. Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said that during his meeting with the president on Monday [21 March], national and international issues were discussed.

Private Sector Participation in Defense Sector Planned

BK2403163093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 24 Mar 93

[Text] The government has decided to involve the private sector in the development and production of items required by the defense forces. A policy package containing various concessions is under active consideration of the government to attract the private sector in defense production. The areas selected for the private sector include indigenous manufacture of helicopters, processing and manufacture of strategic materials like special steel and related alloys, hydraulic-related industry, optical instruments, and materials for use in aerospace and engineering industry.

Sri Lanka

Seven-Party Tamil Group Urges Foreign Mediation To End War

BK2503095693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0908 GMT 25 Mar 93

[Text] Colombo, March 25 (AFP)—A seven-party Tamil alliance called Thursday for international mediation to end Sri Lanka's ethnic bloodshed and accused majority Sinhalese of trying to impose a solution on them.

The Tamil parties in a joint statement accused a parliamentary select committee of being a "shabby attempt at unilaterally imposing a Sinhala sectarian opinion on the (minority) Tamil people."

The alliance formally announced its withdrawal from the committee which was set up in August 1991 to hammer out a consensus solution to the island's dragging Tamil separatist campaign.

"We appeal to the secular democratic forces amongst the Sinhala people as well as to the international community to mediate a solution...," the three-page statement said.

The future of the committee was uncertain Thursday following this week's prorogation of parliament which normally leads to the automatic dissolution of all committees of the legislative assembly.

The committee was due to have its 44th meeting Friday and MP's said they have not been informed about a cancellation.

In a draft report earlier this month the committee said a majority of legislators rejected making any territorial concessions to Tamils but agreed to give them more autonomy.

"They are talking about delinking the (currently united) northern and eastern provinces and in exchange adopting an Indian model. But we don't know what powers they are willing to devolve," a Tamil politician said.

Tamils have insisted on keeping as one unit the two regions where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. The areas account for about one third of the total land area of the island.

The island's dominant Tamil separatist group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), is bitterly opposed to the seven Tamil parties in the alliance but agrees on the territorial issue. Four parties in the alliance have members in parliament.

The LTTE, which is the main military protaganist in the costly civil war in the island's northeast, has steered clear of the committee despite repeated appeals by the government to make its proposals known.